

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 144

By Bone

A RESOLUTION relative to the damage to livestock caused by the Black Vulture.

WHEREAS, Tennessee's livestock industry makes great contributions to the agricultural economy and rural economy of this State; and

WHEREAS, cattle production annually generates over four hundred million dollars in cash receipts alone, which monies are spent and invested in our local communities; and

WHEREAS, the men and women who feed, nurture and care for livestock each day of the year, regardless of weather or time of day, contribute to the safest and most affordable food supply in the world; and

WHEREAS, livestock producers consider balancing the effects of nature with the health and safety of their animals as an ethical and humane responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the protection and proliferation of predatory species by the United States government removes livestock producers' ability to provide for the health and safety of the animals under their care; and

WHEREAS, the Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), also known as a buzzard, is common to the southeastern United States and has increased in numbers across Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Black Vultures can kill or injure lambs, calves, cows giving birth, or other incapacitated livestock; and

WHEREAS, initial damage caused by Black Vultures is usually at the eyes and nose, navel, and anal area of newborn and sick livestock. Vultures blind such animals by pecking out their eyes, even if they do not kill them; and

WHEREAS, Black Vultures are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and

WHEREAS, Black Vultures can only be dispatched after obtaining a Migratory Bird Depredation Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which process is time-consuming, laborious and ineffective in dealing with the realities of the damage caused by these predators; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop and implement a simple and effective process that provides livestock producers with the ability to dispatch Black Vultures harming or harassing livestock.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be prepared and delivered to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.